

FWS:JHMc
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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS

WASHINGTON

(September 15, 1944)

Letter
Circular
LC 765

(Supersedes
LC 339)

FLOOR OILS

This letter circular has been prepared to answer the numerous requests received by the National Bureau of Standards for general information regarding floor oils.

At one time new wood floors were treated with repeated applications of hot linseed oil (a drying oil) and each application was buffed by hand. Later a mixture of about one part of boiled linseed oil and about three parts of turpentine (flammable) was used instead of the hot oil application. In recent years a varnish-type of sealer, sometimes referred to as "penetrating floor oil", has been used rather extensively. Floors finished with any of the above materials should be periodically waxed for proper maintenance. Wax may also be applied to a clean floor that has been previously treated with a wood filler if open-grained wood, or to a floor that has been shellacked or varnished.

For old wood floors under conditions where it is impracticable to use other types of floor treatments, a non-drying oil is most commonly used. This type of floor oil is a well-refined, straight petroleum (mineral) oil with a flash point not lower than 300° F, such as paraffin oil. These oils are often scented or perfumed and sometimes colored. Floor oil is generally used as a means to hold dust down.

The following Federal Specifications can be purchased at 5 cents (postage stamps should not be sent) a copy from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C.:

P-O-361 - "Oil, Floor; Mineral"

TT-S-176a, "Sealer, Floor; Varnish-Type (For Wood and Cork)".

National Bureau of Standards Letter Circular LC 764, on "The Care of Floors", will be sent free upon request, addressed directly to the Bureau.

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